



NEWS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

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Corps districts team up in response to Southeast Idaho flooding

UPPER SNAKE RIVER, Idaho – Four U.S. Army Corps of Engineers districts teamed up to provide flood-fight resources to help counties in southeast Idaho cope with increased flooding.

Walla Walla District Emergency management personnel coordinated with Corps' Portland and Seattle districts to provide a Crisafulli pump, a PTO-powered 'trailer pump', and 100,000 sandbags to Bear Lake County, which is in the Corps' Sacramento District, and a Crisafulli pump to Jefferson County. The sandbags and pumps arrived today.

Residents of flood-prone areas are encouraged to keep informed of changing river and weather conditions on the National Weather Service website at <http://water.weather.gov/ahps/forecasts.php> – which includes flows data, weather forecasts and flood alerts – and by tuning in to local radio and television news stations.

The Corps' Walla Walla District continues to coordinate with state and local emergency management agencies. Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security, and county and city emergency management agencies are taking additional precautions.

Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security <http://www.bhs.idaho.gov> encourages Idaho residents to be prepared to respond to localized flooding. Individuals are encouraged to contact local emergency management agencies to ensure they understand how to receive updates and information specific to their location. Most county emergency management departments in Idaho have flood-preparedness information on their websites. Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security has an alert system that, based on zip code, will send alerts to whatever device residents choose – sign up at <https://mystateusa.com/alertSignup.aspx?region=670>.

Early forecasts indicate that this will be one of the top five years on record. Snake River Basin water volumes are forecasted to be similar to 1997.

Corps water management officials continue coordinating with other federal and non-federal dam managers to make adjustments in river system operations that will best accommodate the increased run-off inflows. Reservoirs are being drafted ahead of anticipated heavy spring runoff. The Corps works closely with other agencies and local government entities to notify the public as early as possible when changes to flows are necessary.

The Corps is authorized to work with states, counties and other public entities to provide necessary resources and information. The Corps does not have authority to provide disaster assistance directly to individuals. The organization will continue to carefully watch the evolving situation and respond, when requested, with whatever assistance is authorized, appropriate and available.

The first responsibility for protecting homes and property from flood damage rests with the individual. Local governments and agencies, such as flood control districts, may share in this responsibility, and together form a community's first line of defense in preventing flood damages. Occasionally, however, local resources are not able to control or contain a flood emergency situation. The Corps' flood disaster assistance program is intended to supplement and assist local governments, institutions and special-purpose districts when more help is needed.

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The Walla Walla District is prepared to assist states and municipalities with flood-management support, if requested, said Jeff Stidham, Walla Walla District emergency management specialist. That assistance could include technical expertise, supplies and materials, equipment or contracts for emergency flood-fighting work.

“We're watching rivers and streams throughout the Walla Walla District and staying in touch with local emergency officials so, if requested to, we can plan, prepare or act,” said Stidham. “Our top priority is the public's safety, so we're encouraging folks in low-lying parts of flood-prone areas stayed tuned to information and advisories provided by the National Weather Service or their local emergency-service agencies and be ready to take action according to local flood response plans.”

State and local agencies needing disaster assistance from the Corps should contact the Walla Walla District Emergency Management Office at (509) 527-7146, or (509) 380-4538.

For more information about Emergency Management Assistance, check out the District's Web site at www.nww.usace.army.mil/html/offices/op/em/flodasst.htm or call (509) 527-7145.

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